


ATTACHMENT 5.1
U.S. EPA GRANT REQUEST

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MARCH 6, 2003

MEMO

TO: Energy and Environment Committee (EEC)
FROM:  Molly Hoffman, Senior Regional Planner, Aviation and Environmental Planning, 213-236-1804, hoffman@scag.ca.gov
DATE: March 6, 2003
SUBJECT: EPA Grant Proposal – Assessing the Consequences of Global Change (Land Use and Transportation Systems) for Air Quality

Recommended Action:

Receive and File

Summary:

Staff has requested the Administrative Committee and RC to grant staff the authority to submit to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a grant application requesting \$750,000 (\$250,000 per year for 3 years) to study the air quality impacts (mobile source emissions) from the interactions between land-use and regional transportation systems. EPA is seeking applications for research into the consequences of global change for air quality. The research would commence no earlier than October 2003 and continue for up to three years. The timeliness of this grant coincides with and complements the objectives of SCAG's Growth Visioning process, as well as the development of SCAG's 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Background:

The EPA, as part of its Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program, is seeking applications for research into the consequences of global change for air quality. EPA is particularly interested in the spatial distribution of mobile source emissions due to the interactions between climate, land-use, and technology change and regional transportation systems.

State and local governments as well as academic and not-for profit institutions are eligible to apply for assistance under the program. The anticipated funding amount is approximately \$8 million dollars to be allocated amongst 12-15 participants. The potential funding per award is up to \$250,000 per year for up to 3 years and requests over \$750,000 will not be considered. The application due date is April 9, 2003. A starting date of no earlier than October 2003 is assumed for budget purposes.

SCAG is an ideal candidate for this grant for many reasons. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Southern California, SCAG is the vehicle for integrating transportation planning, land use planning and the environment. The timeliness of the grant coincides with and complements the objectives of SCAG's Growth Visioning process as well as the development the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Both the Growth Visioning Process and the 2004 RTP will evaluate the best growth and development strategies to meet the needs of Region and its environment.

For example, the location and design of new development can affect the level of impact on the environment. The physical characteristics and patterns of land development in a region can affect air quality by influencing travel mode choices, trips, trip speed, number of miles driven, and therefore mobile source emissions. Characteristics of urban form that have been found to affect trip making include: density, mix of land uses, transit accessibility, pedestrian environment/urban design factors, and regional patterns of compactness with a jobs/housing balance. There is also increasing interest in developing "smart growth" strategies (e.g. compact, mixed-use development with a variety of transportation options and pedestrian-oriented urban form) in order to improve air quality by reducing overall vehicle-related emissions.

Staff has requested that the Administrative Committee and RC grant staff the authority to submit to EPA a grant application in the amount of \$750,000 (\$250,000 per year for 3 years) to study the changes in spatial distribution of mobile source emissions due to the interactions between climate, land-use, and technology change and regional transportation systems.